

Message Text

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73

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2120

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

GTMO NAVAL BASE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 3503

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, JM

SUBJECT: STATE OF EMERGENCY SITREP

REFERENCE: KINGSTON 3172

1. JAMAICAN SECURITY FORCES AUGUST 19 RELEASED VARIOUS STATISTICS ON STATE OF EMERGENCY WHICH WOULD INDICATE A SHARP DECREASE IN CRIME SINCE THAT EMERGENCY WAS DECLARED ON JUNE 19.

2. POLICE SPOKESMAN CLAIMED VIOLENT CRIME DOWN 50 PERCENT COMPARED WITH TWO-MONTH PERIOD IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING JUNE 19. AS EXAMPLES, HE STATED THERE HAD BEEN 121 SHOOTINGS IN TWO-MONTH PERIOD BEFORE JUNE 19 AND ONLY 60 SHOOTINGS SINCE THEM. SIMILARLY NUMBER OF "SERIOUS CRIMES" FOR SAME PERIODS HAD DROPPED FROM 467 TO 246.

3. SPOKESMAN ALSO CLAIMED 121 FIREARMS, 1870 ROUNDS OF AMMUNITION AND 720 EXPLOSIVE DEVICES HAD BEEN SEIZED SINCE JUNE 19.

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4. SINCE JUNE 19, 1768 PEOPLE HAD BEEN SEIZED FOR

QUESTIONING BUT ONLY 419 WERE HELD AND SUBSEQUENTLY CHARGED FOR VARIOUS OFFENSES. SEPARATE FROM FOREGOING STATISTICS 173 INDIVIDUALS HAD BEEN DETAINED UNDER EMERGENCY REGULATIONS WHICH WENT INTO EFFECT WITH THE STATE OF EMERGENCY. NINE OF THESE HAVE BEEN RELEASED, LEAVING 164 PRESENTLY IN THE DETENTION CAMP AT UP CAMP PARK (HEADQUARTERS OF JAMAICAN DEFENSE FORCE).

5. COMMENT: MORALE AND EFFECTIVENESS SECURITY FORCES CONTINUE TO DECLINE FOR REASONS CITED REFTEL BUT ESPECIALLY PLAIN EXHAUSTION. ALTHOUGH NO DATE FOR TERMINATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY HAS YET BEEN ANNOUNCED MOST OBSERVERS HERE NOW ASSUME IT WILL CONTINUE AT LEAST UNTIL JUST BEFORE ELECTIONS WHICH PRESENTLY ANTICIPATED FOR JANUARY OR FEBRUARY 1977. CONCERNING CRIME STATISTICS, ALL ARE SUSPECT AND MOST CERTAINLY VERY MUCH ON LOW SIDE.

6. SEVERAL INCIDENTS IN RECENT DAYS SUGGEST ENFORCEMENT STATE OF EMERGENCY BECOMING MORE BLATANTLY POLITICAL. AMONG THEM HAVE BEEN RAIDS ON OFFICES OF VARIOUS ATTORNEYS REPRESENTING JLP MEMBERS CURRENTLY UNDER DETENTION. DURING RAIDS CONFIDENTIAL FILES OF ATTORNEYS THOROUGHLY REVIEWED AND SOME SEIZED. JAMAICAN BAR ASSOCIATION HAS PROTESTED FOREGOING TO MINISTER OF JUSTICE, COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, AND JAMAICA DEFENSE FORCE CHIEF OF STAFF IN WELL PUBLICIZED STATEMENT.

7. INTIMIDATION OF OPPOSITION POLITICIANS AND SUPPORTERS ALSO BECOMING RATHER OBVIOUS WITH MIDNIGHT RAIDS ON HOMES FOR NO APPARENT PURPOSE (OTHER THAN HARASSMENT), AND ROUGHING UP OF VARIOUS INDIVIDUALS BY POLICE. OPPOSITION LEADER SEAGA HAS PUBLICLY PROTESTED ONE INCIDENT DURING WHICH (HE ALLEGES) 18 PERSONS WERE SEIZED BY POLICE, GUNBUTTED, KICKED, FORCED TO DO PRESSUPS, AND FORCED TO CRAWL ON THEIR KNEES PRIOR TO ACTUAL DETENTION, ALL WERE RELEASED FOLLOWING MORNING, BUT SOMETHEN REQUIRED MEDICAL TREATMENT. THERE ARE ALSO INDICATIONS THAT POLICE ON SEVERAL OCCASION HAVE USED STATE OF EMERGENCY AS PRETEXT TO SHOOT FIRST AND THUS AVOID NECESSITY OF ASKING QUESTIONS LATER. IN MOST CONFIDENTIAL

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OF THESE CASES THERE IS SUBSEQUENT PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT THAT INDIVIDUAL (OR INDIVIDUALS) SHOT AND KILLED "WHILE ATTACKING POLICE" WITH MACHETE OR CLUB. NOT EXPLAINED IN EACH OF THESE SAME INSTANCES IS WHY ONE OR TWO INDIVIDUALS WOULD ATTACK WELL-ARMED PATROLS AND WHY THE INDIVIDUALS SOMETIMES HAVE BEN SHOT IN THE BACK.

8. ALTHOUGH STATE OF EMERGENCY AND SUBSEQUENT REDUCTION

IN INTENSITY VIOLENT CRIME INITIALLY WELCOMED BY GENERAL
PUBLIC, SIGNS OF STRAIN ARE NOW APPEARING. INCIDENTS
ALONG ABOVE LINES ARE RESENTED WITH EMERGENCE SOME
BACKLASH WHICH UNDOUBTEDLY IS WORKING AGAINST MANLEY.
GERARD

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